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COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

DEPARTMENT OF ARBORETA AND BOTANIC GARDENS

BIENNIAL REPORT

1981 ~ 1983

Department of
Arboreta and Botanic Gardens

Francis Ching
Director

301 NORTH BALDWIN AVENUE, ARCADIA, CA 91006-2697 PHONE: (818) 446-8251

July 2, 1984

Honorable Board of Supervisors
County of Los Angeles
383 Hall of Administration
500 West Temple Street
Los Angeles, California 90012

Gentlemen:

During this biennium the Department of Arboreta and Botanic Gardens was able to provide all major services to the public with a severe reduction in staff from 150.5 budgeted positions in 1977 to 80.1 positions in 1982. Attendance at the three major gardens has gradually increased since 1978 when admission charges were first implemented.

For the first time, private companies were contracted to maintain portions of the grounds. This was done in accordance with County policy to compensate for a small number of positions which were eliminated. Receiving financial and volunteer support from the four foundations at an accelerated rate, improvements and maintenance of the grounds and facilities were kept at a reasonable level.

The continuation of the gardens' public services programs, improvements and maintenance despite reduced staff was accomplished with everyone's help, from staff to volunteers and foundation members.

Very truly yours,

Francis Ching
Director

FC:cl

LOS ANGELES STATE & COUNTY ARBORETUM

The Los Angeles State and County Arboretum covers 127 acres in the city of Arcadia. Plants collected from many countries around the world are grown, tested and displayed in sections based on their continent of origin. Several areas are also maintained for visitors with special interests such as the Tropical Greenhouse, Groundcover Display, Sunset Magazine Demonstration Home Gardens, and the Prehistoric and Jungle Garden. Located on property that was a portion of the prosperous Rancho Santa Anita, the Arboretum continues to preserve its heritage through the maintenance of the Queen Anne Cottage and matching Coach Barn and the Hugo Reid Adobe.

Garden improvements this biennium included the installation of a sprinkler system and landscaping around the Ayres Hall of Environmental Education. Nearby, the Garden For All Seasons was completely relocated north of its original plot, and the growing beds were raised with railroad ties. A brick patio with benches, a sundial, and a drinking fountain were also completed in the same area.

Capital improvements with plants, supplies and labor provided by John Galbraith and funds provided by the California Arboretum Foundation included the construction of the ramada on the west side of Ayres Hall of Environmental Education. Other capital improvements by the California Arboretum Foundation include an additional service gate to provide access to the grounds from the south parking lot. Electrical lights and fixtures were installed along the tram road and mall paths for use during evening events such as concerts. The entrance to the garden has a new look with the gift shop now located in the old exit area. An interpretive center, made possible by funds donated by the Hancock Park Garden Club, was completed in the African Section.

In the historical area, much-needed improvements were made on the Coach Barn and Queen Anne Cottage for the first time since the buildings were renovated in the 1950s. The barn acquired a new fire-proof shingle roof, and the interior of the Queen Anne Cottage was replaced.

A student horticultural intern program, funded by the California Arboretum Foundation, assisted in the grounds maintenance program. A major event was added to the Arboretum calendar with a 10-day fall flower show in October and November of each year. This event, Garden Show, is supported by the plant industry of Southern California, the Los Angeles State and County Arboretum, and the California Arboretum Foundation.

A private landscape maintenance contractor was employed to maintain the parkway on both sides of Baldwin Avenue and the parking lot. This contractor was additionally responsible for mowing, lawn renovation and weed control inside the Arboretum. A service contract was completed by a private tree service for the removal and pruning of 30 large trees on the Arboretum grounds.

New plant accessions for the Los Angeles State and County Arboretum totaled 2,293 for 1981-82 and 1,569 for 1982-83.

WEATHER	1981-82	1982-83
Highest temperature	108 Sept. 2	108 Aug. 6
Lowest temperature	31 Jan. 8	34 Jan. 2
Days of rain	45	61
Rainiest month	Mar. 6.94"	Mar. 11.65"
Total rain	18.73"	39.90"

FLOWER SHOWS & SPECIAL EVENTS AT THE ARBORETUM

Begonia Juding Course
Health Services/Probation Dept.
Environmental Education Fair
Southland Orchid Show
Baldwin Bonanza XIII
Garden Show 1983
Gladiolus Bulb Sale
Baikoen Kenkyukai Bonsai Show
Temple City Camellia Show
Wild Mushroom Fair
Fuchsia Lore Show
Girl Scout Flower Show
Herbal Symposium Display
Aril Show
Chrysanthemum Show
Fall Bonsai Show
Mame Show
Amaryllis Show
Pacific Rose Show
Epiphhyllum Show
Satsuki Azalea Show
National Fuchsia Show
Bromeliad Show
Cactus and Succulent Show
Miniature Rose Show
Queen Anne Frolic
4-H Judging Event
American Begonia Show
Dept. of Adoptions
Fantasy Fiesta
Arboretum District Fall Flower Show

MEETINGS AT THE ARBORETUM

Arboretum Dist.-Calif. Garden Club
Board of Governors Meeting
Pacific Rose Society
Santa Anita Bonsai Society
Las Voluntarias Board Meeting
Cal. Arboretum Found. Exe. Meeting
Cal. Arboretum Found. Trustees Meeting
Begonia Society
So. Calif. Camellia Society
Arcadia Garden Club
Mame Society
SGV Cactus & Succulent Society
Hemerocallis & Amaryllis Society
Los Angeles County Health Services Dept.
Sunset Panel Meeting
Akebono Bonsai Society
SGV Orchid Hobbyists
Bellflower Women's Club
Los Angeles County Courts
Los Angeles County Health Center
Arcadia Sister City Commission
Cal. Parks & Recreation Society
Children Services Staff Meeting
Environ. Educ. Fair Steering Committee
L.A. County Dept. of Personnel Training Session
L.A. County Senior Citizens Affairs Meeting
So. Calif. Gladiolus Society
Herb Society
Entomological Association
UC Riverside Extension Seminar
Ikebana Interna. Board Meeting
Rare Fruit Growers Association
American Bamboo Society
DPSS Training
Bromeliad Study Group
Santa Anita Highland Oaks Garden Club
Mechanical Dept. Employment Committee
KRTH Meeting
UCLA Horticulturist
SG Aux. of Arcadia Methodist Hospital
Victory Church Meeting
So. Calif. Iris Society
Cymbidium Society
Greater L.A. Rose Council
Epiphyllum Soc. of America
Management Council Meeting
National Fuchsia Society
Management Council Meeting
Arcadia PTA Council
Aril Society
Southland Orchid Soc. Board

DESCANSO GARDENS

A major improvement at Descanso Gardens this biennium was construction of a new Education-Administration complex which includes an administration building, gift shop, information section, two classrooms, restrooms, large exhibit hall, and a complete kitchen. The building was dedicated in September 1982, and landscaping is still in progress. The community, County departments, and horticultural and plant societies have been using the building often with many more gardening groups requesting reservations. More flower shows have been added to the calendar, and it is evident that this new complex is filling a community need.

Horticultural development continues at Descanso with the addition of 75 lilacs planted adjacent to the rose garden along the tram route. All six 1981-83 AARS winning roses were planted in the modern rose garden. The rose garden received an Excellent rating for 1981. The rating was awarded for the fine care and cultivation of the roses and the extended bloom period, as observed by thousands of visitors. .

In 1982, a large number of conifers were attacked by the Aleppo pine mite. Fifteen redwood trees were lost because of the mite attack. Twenty-five trees were lost in the rain storms last winter; the majority of them were oak trees in the camellia forest. Loss of these oaks brought additional problems by exposing the camellias to direct sun, which could eventually damage them. Trees will be planted to replace the ones which went down.

Several major events are held annually at Descanso Gardens. Held each year this biennium were the Christmas Show and the two-week long Spring Flower Show both sponsored by the Guild, the Camellia Show displayed by the Camellia Council, and the Bonsai, Chrysanthemum, and Daffodil Shows. A Paseo was also given.

The docent training program was expanded somewhat as a total of 52 new docents went through a seven week training course to prepare them to conduct guided field trips for elementary school children.

WEATHER	1981-82	1982-83
Highest temperature	109 Sept. 27	103 Sept. 23
Lowest temperature	26 Jan. 3	31 Jan. 31 & Apr. 31
Days of rain	38	64
Rainiest month	March 7.7"	March 14.8"
Total rainfall	19.53"	50.14"

FLOWER SHOWS & SPECIAL EVENTS AT DESCANSO

Rose Pruning Demonstration
Day at Descanso
Camellia Show
Daffodil Show
Spring Flower Show
Bonsai Show
Paseo Por Descanso
Annual Air Faire
Horseless Carriage Show
Annual Plant Sale
Chrysanthemum Show
Ikebana Flower Show
Annual Christmas Show

MEETINGS AT DESCANSO

Camellia Seminar
Pacific Camellia Society
Sunset Panel Meeting
L.A. County Pin Service Luncheon
Verdugo Hospital Seminar
L.A. County Probation
Bonsai Meeting
Daffodil Meeting
La Canada Educational Foundation
L.A. County Schools Seminar
L.A. County Librarians
Yamaha School of Music
Chrysanthemum Society
Incoming Artist Reception
Board of Governors
Los Angeles Beautiful Dinner
Descanso Gardens Guild Project Board Meeting

SOUTH COAST BOTANIC GARDEN

South Coast Botanic Garden, formerly the site of a sanitary landfill on the Palos Verdes Peninsula, has made considerable progress in the past two years. Volunteers increased their active roles when the County budget cuts necessitated a reduction in staff to seven positions.

Water lines are often damaged due to subsidence from underlying rubbish. This situation also affects the roadways, making them uneven and cracking the asphalt. With assistance from the Sanitation District, repairs have been made in the water system and road areas of extreme concern have been rebuilt. Methane gas, a by-product of refuse decomposition, has also caused problems at the garden, but dozens of methane recovery wells have now been installed. The recovered gas will be used to generate electricity for use in residential areas.

A new Clark tractor was donated and the tram cars refurbished in order to continue tours of the garden for visitors. Trees, shrubs, and groundcovers have been planted on the Crenshaw bank and north and south fence lines to make those areas more attractive.

The volunteer flower and vegetable garden, located near the tram loading zone provides year-round color. The flowers and vegetables from this section are shared with the needy 'Meals on Wheels.' Nearby is a new rose garden and, within a short walking distance, a cactus and succulent garden in the early stages of development.

Strong, gale-force winds on the morning of November 30, 1982, toppled over 200 trees, and the heavy rains that followed caused damage to the stream outfall and other areas of the garden.

Approximately 85 activities are scheduled each month in our auditorium and classrooms. Two new plant societies now meet here on a regular monthly basis, the California Native Plant Society and the South Coast Branch of the American Begonia Society. This brings the number of societies meeting monthly at South Coast to eleven.

WEATHER	1981-82	1982-83
Highest temperature	101 Aug. 25	101 Aug. 21
Lowest temperature	29 Jan. 6	30 Dec. 29
Days of rain	35	57
Rainiest month	Mar. 3.8"	Mar. 6.86"
Total rain	11.02"	28.2"

FLOWER SHOWS & OTHER SPECIAL EVENTS AT SOUTH COAST

Fruit Tree Pruning
Camellia Show
Sunday Afternoons at the Gardens
Creative Flower Arranging
Fiesta De Flores
Rose Show
Fuchsia Show and Sale
Cactus Show
Bromeliad Show
Dahlia Show
Bonsai Show
Herb Fair
Holidays in the Garden

MEETINGS AT SOUTH COAST

Bromeliad Society
Medical Association Auxiliary
Diggers Club
Bonsai Association Meeting
Herb Society
Dahlia Society
Rose Society
P.V.P. Coordinating Council Meeting
Fuchsia Board Meeting
Rolling Hills 4-H Club
Riviera Garden Club
South Bay Orchid Society
New Horizons Ceramic Club
League of Women Voters
The Assembly-Social Graces
Smith College
Girl Scout Meeting
L.A. Medical Auxiliary
Designer's Study Group
South Bay Alumni Club
Rolling Hills High School Booster
Miss P.V. Pageant Rehearsal
Delta Kappa Meeting
A.A. Meeting
Business Research & Development Meeting
Audubon Society
Fuchsia Board Meeting
Costa Verde Garden Club
Boy Scout Meeting
Camellia Society
Rolling Hills Community Assoc.
P.V. High School Cotillion
South Bay Bromeliad Society
South West District Med. Aux.
Long Beach Cactus Meeting
L.A. Chapter Ikebana Int. Board
Silver Spur Garden Club
Cancer Society
University Women
County Council Meeting
Panhellenic Meeting
Calif. Assn. of Nurserymen
Judges' Council of So. Calif.
South Coast Development Board
Canyon Verde School Meeting
Ascension Lutheran Church
State Dept. of Transportation
Daffodil Meeting
City of Redondo Beach

PUBLIC SERVICES DIVISION

This division is responsible for a variety of services provided to the visitors of all four garden facilities. Staff members of this division collect admissions and operate the trams. They also prepare and produce signs, brochures, news releases, maps, and displays to provide information to the public. Other services under the jurisdiction of this division include the maintenance of the interior of the historical buildings and archival records, and operation of the plant science library. Specific activities of this division for the 1981-83 period are described below.

Arbor Day

Each year, the Los Angeles State and County Arboretum grows approximately one thousand trees for distribution to schools in Los Angeles County to encourage the observance of Arbor Day, March 7. The objective of the program is to call attention to the importance of good conservation practices and environmental awareness. A packet of resource material is produced and distributed to the teachers of participating classes. This material includes basic information and interesting facts about plants and trees, ideas for class projects, and worksheets which can be reproduced for the students.

In 1982, a total of 878 trees were distributed to 878 schools. The Tree of the Year was an Arboretum introduction, *Albizzia julibrissin*, the silk tree.

In 1983, a total of 839 trees were distributed to 839 schools. The Tree of the Year was an Arboretum introduction, *Lagerstroemia fauriei*, related to the common crape myrtle.

School Field Trips

The Los Angeles State and County Arboretum, Descanso Gardens, and South Coast Botanic Garden offer guided field trips free of charge to elementary school students (grades 3 through 6) from schools located in Los Angeles County. Two basic areas of study are available: the relationship of plants and man, and early California history. Field leaders are volunteers who have received instruction from staff education specialists. The subjects presented are developed in accord with the approved State of California textbooks.

Field Trip Attendance

	1981-82	1982-83
South Coast Botanic Garden	2148 students (67 classes)	1499 students (32 classes)
Descanso Gardens	7209 students (225 classes)	4517 students (141 classes)
Los Angeles State & County Arboretum	6467 students (215 classes)	9351 students (294 classes)
TOTAL	15824 students (507 classes)	15356 students (467 classes)

PLANT SCIENCE LIBRARY

The Plant Science Library, located at the Los Angeles State and County Arboretum, is open daily during regular business hours. It is used by the general public, staff members, horticulture students, and gardening enthusiasts. The library was expanded this biennium to include the area formerly occupied by the Herbarium. New shelves were purchased to accommodate additional library acquisitions. The library now contains a total of 27,000 books, magazines, and other publications.

A total of 4168 people utilized the library from 1981-1983, and 1274 people who requested information by telephone were assisted by the librarian.

HISTORICAL SECTION

Major improvements in the Historical Section included the installation of a new roof on the Coach Barn, and new carpeting and interior painting in the Queen Anne Cottage. Newspaper articles and other printed material pertinent to the history of the Arboretum as well as photographs and antique articles (i.e. clothing and furniture) are catalogued as part of the historical files.

PUBLICATIONS

Special articles from this division have been sent to newspapers and magazines, and news releases are regularly sent out to the media for publicity on flower shows and special events.

During this biennium, several brochures, leaflets, and maps have been revised. A booklet was produced that presents a descriptive, self-guided walking tour of the Arboretum, and a new brochure was printed for general distribution describing Garden highlights.

PLANT INFORMATION

Three hours each weekday morning, volunteers screen telephone requests for plant information from the public. They assist approximately 5,000 callers each year.

GRAPHICS AND REPRODUCTION

An Interpretive Center was constructed in the Arboretum's African Section. It houses six panels of illustrated text to provide visitors with information on the vegetation in that section.

A Metalphoto processor was purchased so that photosensitive aluminum plates could be utilized for plant labels at all of the Department's facilities. Informative plaques have been made using this material and installed in the Prehistoric and Jungle Garden and the Historical Section.

A process camera and platemaker were also added to the print shop, eliminating the extra time and expense of sending work to outside sources for prepress preparation.

VIRGINIA ROBINSON GARDENS

At the Virginia Robinson Gardens improvements have been made on the paved roads and a small parking lot has been added. The footpaths have been resurfaced and several handrails installed to allow safer access through the hillside garden. Two supporting organizations were established, the Friends of Robinson Gardens and the Virginia Robinson Gardens Foundation. Plans are underway for several fund-raising events and organized public walking tours.

RESEARCH

Research activities at the Los Angeles State and County Arboretum were severly curtailed this biennium. New emphasis has been placed on updating plant records and on the proposed accession and display labels. A mapping crew has been formed to inventory the plants on the grounds. Their findings will be compared with existing records so these records can be made current. All other research projects, including the guayule project, have been completed. The Herbarium was relocated to the Research Building to allow for the expansion of the library.

SUPPORT ORGANIZATIONS

California Arboretum Foundation

The California Arboretum Foundation, Inc. is the non-profit support organization for the Los Angeles State and County Arboretum. Membership in the Foundation totals 3200, and from this membership, volunteers have donated more than 66,000 hours of work toward the Arboretum and its programs.

The Foundation supplied $107,000 for services and supplies for the maintenance of the garden. Major capital projects included the purchase of Metalphoto processing equipment for plant labels and signs, the construction of interpretive centers to provide information for visitors on various plant collections, a new roof on the Coach Barn, and the relocation and expansion of the Gift Shop. The Foundation also continued to fund a student intern program at the Arboretum at a cost of approximately $35,000.

Major events at the Los Angeles State and County Arboretum sponsored by the Foundation this biennium included summer concerts, Garden Show, the Queen Anne Frolic, and the Baldwin Bonanza plant sale.

Descanso Gardens

Descanso Gardens Guild is a non-profit support organization serving the needs of Descanso Gardens in many areas. The Guild sponsors fund-raising events, educational programs, and supplies volunteers for a variety of projects at the gardens. There are now 1,600 members in the Guild, and during the past two fiscal years, a total of 55,000 volunteer hours have been contributed to develop and improve Descanso Gardens.

The Guild's major capital project this period was the completion of the new Education Hall and entrance complex. They also donated approximately $43,000 towards operating expenses, supplies and services. A summer student intern program was underwritten by the Guild for the first time this past year.

Major Guild programs included a plant sale, Christmas show, performing arts summer concert, and a Paseo each year.

SOUTH COAST BOTANIC GARDEN FOUNDATION

South Coast Botanic Garden Foundation was organized to provide assistance to South Coast Botanic Garden. The Foundation supplies not only financial support, but volunteers who donate their time toward the maintenance and improvement of the garden. Membership in the Foundation now totals 1400. Volunteers contributed more than 57,000 hours of work, many of them spent organizing and operating educational and fund-raising events.

The Foundation provided $23,000 this biennium for equipment, supplies, and other materials. $19,570 was contributed to the County towards the Francis Young Hall building fund. A grant from the Norris Foundation provided for the purchase of a new copy machine, a computer, and an electric typewriter. A grant from the Arco Foundation made is possible to improve the tram service at South Coast Botanic Garden. The funds were used to refurbish the 48-passenger trailer and to purchase a new Clark tractor.

DEPARTMENT OF ARBORETA & BOTANIC GARDENS

FINANCIAL REPORT

	1981-82	1982-83
SALARIES & EMPLOYEE BENEFITS	2,360,233	2,392,094
SERVICES & SUPPLIES	248,847	286,869
OTHER CHARGES		154,390
FIXED ASSETS	11,855	2,061
NET APPROPRIATION	2,610,925	2,835,415
LESS REVENUE	524,326	684,797
NET COUNTY COST	2,096,599	2,150,618
NUMBER OF BUDGETED POSITIONS	91.3	88.71

ADMISSION

	1978-79	1979-80	1980-81	1981-82	1982-83
GROSS ADMISSION	754,015	805,824	813,681	768,679	732,708
TOTAL PAID	458,802	472,040	480,012	487,296	441,653
ADULT-PAID	359,212	336,880	342,046	320,403	263,192
OTHER-PAID	99,590	135,128	137,966	167,056	168,170
TOTAL COLLECTED	332,655	329,849	334,891	375,714	538,759
TRAM REVENUE	75,933	77,440	80,890	89,081	125,235
GROUP	4,266	24,117	28,296	25,404	8,216
*DEPOSITED REVENUE	413,293	432,107	443,910	490,322	672,699

*Final totals include overages or shortages

*11 month total August 1978 through June 30, 1979

Missouri Botanical Garden Library
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CALIFORNIA ARBORETUM FOUNDATION, INC.

1981-1982 - JAMES P. CURRY
RICHARD M. RAY

1982-1983 - JACK SHEPHERD

DESCANSO GARDENS GUILD

1981-1982 - MRS. DOTTIE ARONSTAM

1982-1983 - MRS. ANN WEILER

SOUTH COAST BOTANIC GARDEN FOUNDATION

1981-1982 - MRS. CINDY PETERS

1982-1983 - MR. JACK DUSTON

FRIENDS OF ROBINSON GARDENS

1982-1983 - MRS. JOAN SELWYN